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Tuesday, 22 January 2013, 3.20 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Masood Khan/Mr. Ahmad	(Pakistan)
Members:	Argentina	Mrs. Perceval
	Australia	Ms. King
	Azerbaijan	Mr. Sharifov
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	France	Mr. Araud
	Guatemala	Mr. Rosenthal
	Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
	Morocco	Mr. Loulichki
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Shin Dong Ik
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Rwanda	Mr. Nduhungirehe
	Togo	Mr. Menan
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Rice

Agenda

The situation in Mali

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13-21314 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Mali

The President: Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, the Niger, Nigeria and Senegal to participate in this meeting.

Under rule of 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, to participate in this meeting.

Under rule of 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Téte António, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

Under rule of 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Thomas Mayr-Harting, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I give the floor to Mr. Feltman.

Mr. Feltman: The Council is convened today at a potential turning point in the crisis in Mali. The military struggle over northern Mali has been engaged. The Secretary-General has applauded France for its courageous decision to deploy forces to arrest the troubling push by extremist groups southward. He greatly appreciates the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union (AU) and the troop contributors to the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) to accelerate its deployment.

The Secretary-General has been clear in his instructions for the United Nations system to move with all speed to contribute, within the Organization's mandates and capabilities, to resolving the crisis in Mali within the framework of resolution 2085 (2012).

I am pleased to be joined here today by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Djinnit, who has been working tirelessly and cooperating closely with national and regional actors to resolve the situation in Mali.

As we focus today on solutions in Mali, let us not forget that the factors behind the sudden collapse 10 months ago of one of West Africa's most vaunted democracies, and the takeover of half of the country by extremists, run deep. Solutions will not likely come quickly or simply. Dangers line the path ahead. Whether the international community is successful in helping Mali to restore its democracy and recapture its territory in a lasting way will depend on the breadth of its vision and the comprehensiveness of its response. Vigorous military actions must be matched by an equally strong focus on the political challenges in Mali. They must be carried out with full attention to human rights and humanitarian concerns, and they should be reinforced by strategies to address the many transnational threats that combine to breed extremism and weaken governance not just in Mali but across the Sahel.

As the members of the Council are aware, the dynamics in northern Mali have shifted dramatically in recent days. The fall of Konna on 10 January, as part of an apparent attempt by extremists to push southward towards Bamako, had the effect of galvanizing the concerns of Mali and its friends and accelerating the regional and international response to the crisis.

The capabilities of the armed groups occupying northern Mali have proven to be strong, as they are better equipped and trained than initially anticipated. This was illustrated on 14 January, when radical forces opened a new front in Diabaly, only 350 kilometres from Bamako. The extremist armed groups' advance into eastern Mali was successfully repelled and the fighters have reportedly fled these areas. Yet it appears that in the western area, armed elements have moved closer to the Mauritanian border. Meanwhile, the latest reports indicate that the cities of Konna and Diabaly are now under control of the Malian army.

Military sources in Bamako have indicated that in deciding to resume hostilities, the extremists intended to capture Bamako and that the risk of infiltration and further attacks by these groups on southern towns, including Bamako, remains high.

With regard to developments in the subregion related to Mali, on 20 January Nigerian troops on the way to Mali were attacked in northern Nigeria by Boko Haram, and three soldiers were killed. Member

States with access to intelligence and other reports not available to us may have additional information about the situation in Mali and the region, and we would welcome any information that can be shared with us.

On 19 January, ECOWAS held an extraordinary summit in Abidjan to review the latest developments in Mali, particularly the modalities for an accelerated deployment of African forces. The summit endorsed the appointment of AFISMA's military command, called on all troop-contributing countries to make their contingents immediately available, and authorized AFISMA contingents to engage in operations with their units. The summit called upon the United Nations to immediately furnish the logistical and financial support for the deployment of AFISMA. The summit also called on the Government of Mali, the AU and ECOWAS to establish a functional mission headquarters for AFISMA in order to facilitate coordination and deployment, and to establish a joint coordination mechanism on resolution 2085 (2012) to facilitate regular consultations on political leadership, resource mobilization and disbursement, as well as reporting, monitoring and evaluation.

The deployment of AFISMA troops and headquarters staff officers began on 18 January. As of 20 January, 855 troops from Benin, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo had been deployed, along with a full Nigerien battalion at the border with Mali. There is general agreement amongst key stakeholders in Bamako that the envisaged AFISMA strength of 3,300 personnel needs to be increased if AFISMA is to engage effectively in offensive operations and enhance force protection.

The deployment of the Force Commander and establishment of the force headquarters have set the conditions for the planning effort, supported by planners provided by international partners. The planning process also provides an opportunity to review and revise, as necessary, the AFISMA troop requirements, command and control structures, liaison mechanisms and other important matters.

On 21 January, the President of the ECOWAS Commission and the Chair of the ECOWAS Committee of Chiefs of Defence Staff visited Bamako. They met with the AFISMA Force Commander and other officers, and visited AFISMA troops already on the ground, as well as the French forces. They also met senior Chadian officers to discuss the deployment of the 2,000-strong Chadian troops and their coordination with AFISMA.

Due to the accelerated deployment of AFISMA troops, critical equipment, logistical and other support for the troops are urgently required. In accordance with paragraph 11 of resolution 2085 (2012), the United Nations is supporting AFISMA headquarters in planning activities, including assessing the units' equipment and operational readiness. AFISMA is currently facing critical gaps, including communications capacity, air mobility and medical capabilities. Additionally, it is expected that the deployed contingents will have only very limited capacities for self-sustainment. The Malian defence and security forces also have capacity gaps requiring immediate attention.

The African Union and ECOWAS are finalizing a comprehensive list of priority requirements, while the Malian Minister of Defence has indicated that a comprehensive list of the needs of the Malian Defence And Security Forces has been submitted to Interim President Traoré. These will inform the donors' conference that the African Union has called to take place in Addis Ababa on 29 January.

In a welcome development, on 17 January the European Union established a Common Security and Defence Policy mission, headed by Brigadier General François Lecointre of France, that is expected to be on the ground by mid-February to support the training and reorganization of the Malian Armed Forces. The mission will not be involved in combat operations.

As noted in his letter to the Security Council, the Secretary-General is firmly committed to using the tools of the United Nations, as authorized by the Security Council, to help to address the crisis in Mali and to promote the implementation of resolution 2085 (2012). His letter outlines several options for the Security Council's consideration, and he also identifies several concerns regarding capacity, human rights and the safety and security of United Nations personnel and facilities. The Secretary-General is confident that, in exercising its responsibility to debate, and perhaps authorize, the use of United Nations assets, Security Council members will consider carefully both his proposals and his concerns. The options proposed in his letter are as follows.

One option would be for all logistics support to AFISMA to be provided through bilateral channels. That option could be funded through one or a combination of bilateral, United Nations trust fund or United Nations assessed contributions channels.

A second option would be for the United Nations to provide a logistics support package to AFISMA in all phases of its operations. Given that a finalized concept of operations for AFISMA is under development, it is currently not possible to produce a detailed plan for such a support package. Nonetheless, at the request of the Council, the Secretariat has conducted additional planning for a logistics support package. The elements of a possible United Nations support package to AFISMA are contained in the annex to the letter that the Secretary-General submitted. This option would be financed through United Nations assessed contributions.

A third option would be for bilateral partners to provide logistics support to AFISMA during the combat phase of operations, and for the United Nations to provide support to it during the deployment and in the stabilization phases of its operations. This option would significantly reduce some of the risks to the Organization and personnel who are associated with the second option.

Meanwhile, the start-up team for the establishment of the United Nations multidisciplinary presence in Mali arrived in Bamako over the weekend and renewed contacts with stakeholders to continue discussions on the implementation of all aspects of resolution 2085 (2012), including the political and the security processes. The head of the United Nations team in Bamako, Mr. João Honwana, is already on the ground and has begun discussions on a transitional road map, including regarding reconciliation, with Malian partners.

In his meetings with Malian authorities, he emphasized the need for the political and military tracks to go together, as well as the need for a clear vision on the part of Malian authorities on what needs to be done, around which international support can be rallied to move the transitional process forward. He also raised the need for raising awareness of the risks of ethnic tensions and retaliation taking place in Mali. In that regard, I note again that the multidisciplinary office includes human rights expertise.

The Malian Government has expressed its full agreement on the need for the military and political processes to evolve jointly, and informed the United Nations team that it was moving swiftly with an inclusive consultation exercise with key civil and political actors on the transitional road map, prior to its submission for approval to the National Assembly within two or three weeks. The Malian Government also reiterated its desire for a discrete and light United Nations presence in Bamako, with interlocutors with whom they could frankly exchange views and rely on for advice. The authorities also noted that Mali needed a broader reconciliation process, which could be carried out only once basic State authority and control had been re-established in the north. On elections — an essential element of the political process — Malian officials were of the view that elections would have to take place once critical northern positions had been brought back under Government control.

Special Representative of the Secretary-General Djinnit has also continued to engage national and regional actors to shore up support for the implementation of resolution 2085 (2012). On 17 January, he met with President Dioncounda Traoré in Bamako and highlighted the importance of the political process. On 18 January, he attended the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council meeting in Abidjan, and on 19 January Mr. Djinnit participated in the ECOWAS Summit of Heads of State. He provided clarification on the United Nations role in support to the immediate deployment of AFISMA, following a request from the President of ECOWAS Commission to the Secretary-General dated 17 January.

There is serious concern about the well-being of the population in the north of the country, where malnutrition rates were already reaching emergency thresholds before the resumption of the conflict. The insecurity has forced many humanitarian actors to reduce an already limited presence, or in some cases evacuate the area. The few non-governmental organizations (NGOs) still active the north of Mali point to the region's growing isolation, with the main supply roads from the south and Algeria now cut off. The isolation is increasingly exacerbating the existing shortage of food and other commodities, with fuel shortages already having an impact on the functioning of hospitals and urban water-supply systems.

Despite the challenging environment, the United Nations and its partners are working to address the most pressing needs. Food distribution by the World Food Programme of the United Nations (WFP) is ongoing for 12,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Bamako. UNICEF is currently working with NGO partners to provide and distribute aquatabs in Gao after the Movement for Unity and Jihad in Western Africa seized the fuel used for the water distribution network. The WFP is also preparing to deliver food to

the three northern regions of Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal, to be implemented as soon as possible, as well as the provision of food assistance to 22,000 IDPs and 32,000 IDPs in the Mopti and Ségou regions, respectively.

There are also mounting protection concerns, with reports of retribution attacks against civilian Tuareg and Arab populations and continued allegations of the recruitment of child soldiers and the use of sexual violence as a tool of war. Meanwhile, on 16 January, the International Criminal Court announced that it was opening an investigation into alleged war crimes committed on the territory of Mali since January 2012.

The situation underscores the need to ensure that parties to the conflict avoid harming civilians and comply with international humanitarian law and international human rights norms, including facilitating the rapid and unimpeded passage of relief consignments, equipment and personnel. In that regard, the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy applies to any United Nations support to the military operation undertaken. The policy establishes a set of principles for United Nations entities contemplating or involved in providing support to non-United Nations security forces. Key elements include an assessment of risk, transparency with receiving entities an effective implementation framework.

For 10 months now, the world has watched with horror as the people of northern Mali have been subjected to almost unspeakable brutality at the hands of armed extremists and terrorists. Friends of the Malian people in the region and beyond were shocked by the abrupt collapse of constitutional order in Mali and the threat to Mali's territorial integrity and unity, exacerbating an already dire humanitarian situation. The Council, along with regional and subregional organizations, debated how best to assist the people of Mali to address the full spectrum of the severe political, security, humanitarian, and human rights challenges that they faced. As we have discussed before, the problems of Mali also need to be seen in the context of the broader Sahel region, as we cannot expect to alleviate the crisis in the Sahel without simultaneously improving the situation in Mali, which can spill over, and has in fact done so, into neighbouring countries.

In recent weeks, African and international leaders, including the members of the Council, have by their actions demonstrated their resolve to assist the people and institutions of Mali. We welcome the clear, unified message that we have heard from Council members and beyond that the military and political tracks must proceed hand in hand, with full attention paid to the humanitarian situation and to human rights.

We fully concur that ongoing military operations should take place within the framework of a political process to ensure sustainable peace, stability, and national reconciliation. Likewise, the ongoing military operations should provide the necessary political space for negotiations between the Government and groups that have renounced violence and distanced themselves from terrorist networks. The United Nations will continue to impress upon the Malian leaders the need to agree quickly on a transitional road map to restore effectively constitutional order. We urge others to reinforce that message, for reliance on an exclusively military approach will not allow for the building of a lasting solution for Mali.

The Secretary-General and other senior officials will be in Addis Ababa over the weekend for the AU Summit. The Summit will provide additional opportunities for discussions between United Nations officials and our African and international partners on how collectively we can help the Malian people.

The President: I thank Mr. Feltman for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Mali.

Mr. Daou (Mali) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, the delegation of Mali is delighted to see you preside over the work of the Council in the month of January and wishes you every success in fulfilling your mandate. We would like to pay warm tribute to your great country, Pakistan, and its invaluable contribution to the strengthening of international peace and security.

I take this opportunity also to thank all of the members of the Security Council for their solidarity and their commitment, shoulder to shoulder with the people and the Government of Mali, during this difficult time.

On 20 January 2012, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2085 (2012), authorizing, under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, the deployment in Mali of an African-led international support mission for Mali (AFISMA) so as to assist the Malian Defence and Security Forces to liberate the northern part of the national territory, which is controlled by armed extremist and terrorist groups — the Movement for Unity and Jihad in Western Africa, Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, Ansar Dine and their allies.

At that time the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Mali reiterated the commitment of the Government of Mali to fully cooperate with the Security Council and to abide by its obligations under the resolution, including the holding, through the auspices of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) facilitator, of talks with the Malian rebel groups aimed at inducing them to cut all ties with the terrorists and to recognize the integrity and sovereignty of the national territory as well as the republican and secular character of the State of Mali.

Flouting the spirit and the letter of resolution 2085 (2012), international law, the rule of law and fundamental human rights, terrorist and extremist groups, as well as irredentist movements and criminal networks, continue to defy the international community. The interim President of Mali, Mr. Dioncounda Traoré, in his speech to the nation on 12 January last, rightly noted that

> "those who are occupying Gao, Timbuktu and Kidal and who are inflicting such terrible suffering on the local population have turned a deaf ear to our request for dialogue. They want to extend their criminal activities throughout our entire country. They have proved this by attacking the positions held by our Defence and Security Forces in Kona, in the Mopti region".

The highest Malian authorities have tirelessly advocated a political solution and deployed unflagging efforts to achieve lasting peace. Unfortunately, driven by hatred and obscurantism, jihadist extremists and criminals of all stripes have opted for armed aggression, the taking of further territories, a scorched-earth policy and subjugation so as to fulfil their sorry objectives.

Given that critical situation, the interim President of the Republic issued an appeal for general mobilization and imposed a state of emergency throughout the country. In addition, as supreme leader of the armed forces and in consultation with ECOWAS, he requested and obtained, in the framework of international law, the military support of France to halt the advance of the terrorists, who threaten not only Mali but also other countries of the Sahelo-Saharan region.

May I, on behalf of the Government of Mali, pay warm tribute to France, its people and its President, Mr. François Hollande, who, taking stock of the threat posed by the southward march of the terrorist groups, immediately granted the Malian President's request, thereby making it possible to save Mali as a State and to restore hope to the people and the army of Mali.

Today Malian political circles, civil society, community and religious leaders, as well as young people, all aware of the gravity of the situation and determined to make even the ultimate sacrifice to defend their homeland, have joined in single-hearted unity around the President and the institutions of the Republic, so as to support the Malian army in the combat against terrorists, rebel forces and drug traffickers.

Even as the Security Council is meeting, the fighting continues on various fronts. Together, the Malian army and French troops are continuing to advance.

The sacrifice of the Vietnamese helicopter pilot, Damien Boiteux, who perished on the field of honour on the first day of the French offensive against the rebels in the area of Konna, was not in vain. Mali pays tribute to the memory of that brave combatant and all the martyrs of the Malian army who have shed their blood so that the worthy values of human dignity, freedom and human rights may prevail. Our thoughts also go out to the oppressed peoples in the north, the hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons and the refugees in neighbouring countries. The time has come to liberate Mali's northern region. The towns of Konna, Djabali and Douentza have been retaken and are now fully under the control of the Malian army, supported by French forces.

While we commend the Council on its unanimous commitment to and its support for France's action in Mali, on behalf of my country's Government, I would like to make a solemn appeal to the international community, all friendly countries and all partners to help to mobilize the financial resources necessary for the prompt deployment of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali.

As Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, has just said, an extraordinary meeting of the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government, which also included several countries and organizations, took place on 19 January in Abidjan to consider the deployment of AFISMA. My colleague Ambassador Youssoufou Bamba, Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire and on behalf of the Chairman of ECOWAS, will inform the Council about the summit shortly and will report its conclusions.

Meanwhile, for my part, I would like to express the warm gratitude of the people and Government of Mali to ECOWAS and to commend the promptness with which the countries members of that organization, as well as Chad, offered their troops for early deployment in Mali. All those countries have already dispatched advance groups to prepare for the deployment of their contingents in the coming days.

With regard to the swift deployment of AFISMA, given all the difficulties faced by troop-contributing countries, I would once again like to underscore the urgency of providing international logistical support to AFISMA. In that respect, I am pleased to relay to the Council the request made to the United Nations by the Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS to immediately provide the necessary logistical and financial support for AFISMA's deployment. I would also like to call on the whole international community to participate in the donors conference on the mobilization of financial, logistical and material resources for AFISMA's deployment. That general mobilization on 29 January in Addis Ababa, which we very much hope will include the presence of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, will once again show that what is at stake today in Mali is nothing less than the defence of freedom and democracy.

We are certain that military intervention in Mali to combat the terrorist and rebel groups will promote the political process leading to normalization. I am pleased to recall that the Government of Mali is actively working to simultaneously achieve the transition's two major goals, namely, the restoration of our territorial integrity and the organization of free, transparent and credible elections, in order to bring the transition to an end and to provide the country with legitimate institutions, consistent with the spirit of resolution 2085 (2012).

In that regard, a meeting between the Government of Mali and its technical and financial partners was held yesterday, 21 January, to consider the recommendations and conclusions of the United Nations multidisciplinary assessment mission on Mali's electoral needs, which visited the country from 19 to 30 November 2012.

In conclusion, I would like to convey the gratitude of the Malian authorities to ECOWAS, the African Union, the European Union, the United Nations, our bilateral and multilateral partners, neighbouring countries and all countries of the region for their unwavering support during this difficult time that my country is experiencing.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Téte António, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations.

Mr. António: Allow me to start by congratulating your country, Mr. President, on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of January on the threshold of a new year. I also wish to convey to you and, through you, to the wider membership of the Council, the gratitude of the African Union Commission for this opportunity to contribute to this important and timely briefing on the situation in Mali. We are confident that our discussions today will give a strong impetus to the high-level engagements to be held on the margins of the African Union (AU) Summit, including the donors conference scheduled for 29 January.

(*spoke in French*)

Before dealing with the situation in Mali, allow me to undertake the painful duty of offering my condolences to the Algerian Government and people and to all Governments and peoples whose citizens were victims of the barbarous act committed by terrorists during the hostage-taking in Amenas. The Chairperson of the African Union Commission has condemned that odious act in the strongest terms in a communiqué issued in Addis Ababa.

(*spoke in English*)

Turning to the situation in Mali, following the adoption of resolution 2085 (2012), on 20 December 2012, the efforts of the African Union Commission have focused on helping to create the necessary political conditions, both internally in Mali and within the region, for the effective implementation of that resolution, in close consultation and coordination with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Malian authorities and the United Nations, as agreed in the Strategic Concept for the Resolution of the Crisis in Mali.

The renewed attacks by armed terrorist and criminal groups in northern Mali earlier this month, resulting in the capture of Konna and the subsequent advance towards Sevare, was a clear manifestation of the rapidly deteriorating security situation in northern Mali. Those attacks not only had far-reaching implications for the territorial integrity of Mali and the countries of the region but also were a potential security threat to Africa and the world as a whole.

Such developments underscored the urgency of accelerating the deployment of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA), authorized by the Council through resolution 2085 (2012). That new situation reinforces the recommendation made in the report of the Secretary-General (see S/2012/894) that both the international support mission in Mali and the Malian forces would need the requisite capacities to carry out operations against terrorist and affiliated groups in northern Mali. That will require the timely and well-coordinated provision of a significant amount of support by international partners, including general and specialized equipment, logistics and funding. We have therefore keenly taken note of the information provided by the Secretary-General during his briefing this morning regarding his letter transmitted to the Security Council, as requested in resolution 2085 (2012), containing options for a voluntary and United Nations-funded logistics support package to the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA). We look forward to the Council's reaction, taking into account Africa's concerns as outlined by Mr. Feltman, whom we thank for his very detailed briefing.

For its part, the African Union, through the Chairperson of the Commission, Ms. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, strongly condemned the renewed attacks by armed terrorist and criminal groups in northern Mali and called upon all African Union member States to extend the necessary logistical, financial and capacity-building support to the Malian defence and security forces in line with relevant decisions of the AU Peace and Security Council and United Nations Security Council resolutions.

We wish to thank the African Union member States that have so far pledged troops to AFISMA and those contemplating doing so, as well as other partners for providing logistical and financial support. In its press statement issued on 14 January, the African Union Peace and Security Council acknowledged the assistance provided by France at the request of the Malian authorities and within the framework of Security Council resolution 2085 (2013).

The Commission of the African Union and ECOWAS held a coordination meeting in Addis Ababa on 16 January as part of their efforts to speed up the deployment of AFISMA and help Mali to re-establish its national unity and territorial integrity and facilitate the effective restoration of constitutional order in the country. The discussions focused on the following areas: modalities for expediting the effective implementation of Security Council resolution 2085 (2012); command and control issues pertaining to AFISMA, including how best to expeditiously operationalize and enhance the command and control of the Mission based on the ECOWAS/AU-harmonized concept of operations and best practices from recent AU-led operations; and force generation and funding.

The meeting agreed to set up a Mali integrated task force at the AU headquarters made up of experts from the AU, ECOWAS and the United Nations, including representatives of other international stakeholders, to provide strategic guidance and advice for AFISMA. The meeting also agreed to source additional troop contributions to AFISMA from other AU member States.

The meeting also agreed to hold a donors conference on 29 January, as decided by the AU Peace and Security Council in its communiqué of 13 November 2012 and endorsed by the Security Council in resolution 2085 (2012) following the AU Summit in Addis Ababa. The Conference is expected to mobilize resources and other necessary support for the Malian defence and security forces, as well as for AFISMA.The Chairperson of the AU Commission and the President of ECOWAS Commission will meet on the margins of the AU Summit to further consider issues relating to the deployment of AFISMA and the implementation of other aspects of resolution 2085 (2012).

Allow me to conclude by reiterating the commitment made by both the African Union and ECOWAS in their coordination meeting to spare no effort to expeditiously deploy and operationalize AFISMA, as well as to provide the requisite support, in consultation with the United Nations and other partners, to the process aiming at the full restoration of constitutional order in Mali. The concrete measures taken by the Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS during the Summit held on 19 January in Abidjan provide a prompt response to the urgency of the current situation in Mali.

We also wish to reaffirm the AU's full solidarity with Mali, as well as our full support to the transitional authorities of Mali, namely, interim President Dioncounda Traoré and his Prime Minister Diango Cissoko.

Finally, we wish to appeal to all partners to actively participate in the forthcoming donors conference to be held in Addis Ababa and to contribute generously

to the proposed trust fund. We also wish to take this opportunity to reiterate the appeal of the African Union that efforts to secure funding through United Nations-assessed contributions should continue and be expedited.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Bamba (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 15 member States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

At the outset, I would like to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman for his very informative briefing on the current situation in Mali. I would also like to thank Ambassador Oumar Daou, Permanent Representative of Mali, for his statement, as well as Ambassador Téte António, Permanent Observer of the African Union, for his intervention, which ECOWAS fully supports.

Before taking up what Ambassador Téte António has just said, I would like, on behalf of the 15 ECOWAS member States, to pay tribute to the victims of the tragic events that took place at the in Amenas gas plant in Algeria. The events claimed victims of several nationalities. In the light of these events, the whole world is once again reminded of the brutality and barbarism constantly displayed by terrorists.

Those tragic events confirm, as if there were any further need, that terrorism is a global threat, to effectively counter which will call for strengthened international solidarity. The intervention of French troops, at the request of the legal authorities of Mali, to assist the Malian armed forces in beating back the offensive by terrorist groups underscores the urgent need for such international solidarity.

That was, moreover, the core of the message delivered by President Alassane Ouattara, Chairman of ECOWAS, at the extraordinary session of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government held on 19 January in Abidjan, when he said "The time has come for a broader commitment ... to show greater solidarity with France and Africa".

It is fitting to express our sincere gratitude to France for its leadership in handling the crisis in Mali and to the Governments of the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Canada, Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Russia, Spain and many other countries for the various forms of support they are providing in the ongoing operations in Mali. We welcome the substantial involvement of the European Union as well, which confirmed at the end of the 17 January meeting its commitment to providing training for the Malian armed forces. In the same vein, we would like to thank the neighbouring countries in the Sahel and Maghreb regions for their frank cooperation in this process. We call on them to cooperate further to improve security across the entire region.

The extraordinary ECOWAS summit took important decisions in the context of resolution 2085 (2012). Those decisions relate to the specific and immediate methods for a stepped-up deployment of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA), given the deterioration of the security situation in Mali and the neighbouring countries. In that regard, as Mr. Feltman said, the appointments of Major General Shehu Usman Abdulkadir of Nigeria and Brigadier General Yaye Garba of the Niger, as the Force Commander and Deputy Commander of AFISMA, respectively, have been approved.

The establishment of a joint coordination mechanism for implementing resolution 2085 (2012) by the United Nations, the African Union and ECOWAS was decided for the purpose of facilitating regular consultations on political leadership, resource mobilization and accountability, as well as the monitoring and assessment of expenditures. It was also decided that logistical supplies and financial support would be requested of the United Nations for the deployment of AFISMA, pending the Council's decision on the logistical support called for in resolution 2085 (2012) and given the evolution of the events on the ground in Mali, which has required the accelerated deployment of AFISMA. The President of the ECOWAS Commission was also instructed to take, in close collaboration with the African Union, all the necessary steps for the holding of the donors conference scheduled for 29 January in order to mobilize financial, logistical and material resources for the deployment of AFISMA.

With regard to force generation, I would like to say that the following ECOWAS countries have pledged troops — Burkina Faso, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, the Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. A number of other African countries, although not members of ECOWAS, also pledged troops or other forms of support, thereby showing the great solidarity of the African continent

on this matter. Among others, those countries include Burundi, Chad, Rwanda, South Africa and Tanzania.

From a practical point of view, I would like to inform the Council that, on the orders of President Alassane Ouattara, a mission led by the Minister for Foreign Affaires of Côte d'Ivoire went to Bamako yesterday in order to support and encourage the ECOWAS troops deployed in AFISMA. The delegation also visited French troops, held a working meeting with the AFISMA command and met the troops already there, namely, troops from Benin, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo. Given all the announcements that were made, the total number of AFISMA personnel, which was projected to be 3,300, could be doubled. Up to now, however, only 946 have been deployed.

The visit on the ground brought up three major difficulties, as Mr. Feltman indicated. First, the AFISMA budget has not yet been established, given that contributions are not yet available. Secondly, the AFISMA Force Commander does not have the resources needed for its smooth operation. Thirdly, AFISMA does not have the logistics support it needs to deploy outside Bamako, while AFISMA troops should be rapidly deployed to reinforce Malian and French troops in places liberated from the terrorists.

Given the gravity of the situation in Mali and the subregion, ECOWAS therefore calls the attention of the Security Council to the vital need of making the emergency logistical and financial support package available as requested by the ECOWAS Commission President in his correspondence dated 18 January, which was passed on to the Secretary-General and the Council as an official document.

Motivated by the urgent needs that have arisen in the theatre of operations in Mali, the African Union and ECOWAS, as stated in the press release of the African Union dated 11 January, renewed their request to the Council that it authorize emergency financing through United Nations contributions in order to allow for the swift deployment of AFISMA and the effective conduct of operations. For its part, ECOWAS is taking internal measures to make its contribution in order to deal with the situation.

Furthermore, ECOWAS calls on the goodwill of all people to play an active role and to make commitments to contribute during the donors conference scheduled for 29 January in Addis Ababa, in order to mobilize the financial, logistical and material resources that are essential to accelerating an effective and efficient deployment of AFISMA. On behalf of the Chairman of ECOWAS, I would like to renew the appeal launched to the Secretary-General for him to continue to be personally involved with a view towards making the logistical and financial support package available to AFISMA on an emergency basis. ECOWAS would therefore like the Secretary-General to be able personally to attend and co-chair the donors conference, given the stakes of that meeting for the entire African continent. In that regard, we are convinced that the effective presence of the Secretary-General at that important donors conference would not only ensure its visibility but it would above all ensure its success.

In conclusion, as was emphasized by President Ouattara at the summit held last week in Abidjan, the military intervention and the current course of events were imposed upon us just as all of the efforts of ECOWAS and the African Union were focused on a political resolution among the Malian parties as part of the discussions of Ouagadougou and Algiers and in the context of resolution 2085 (2012).

ECOWAS therefore would strongly remind the transitional Malian authorities of the need to comply with resolution 2085 (2012), the relevant decisions of ECOWAS and those of the African Union as it develops the transitional road map that will permit the holding of the presidential election within the timetables given, with the support of the international community. In the light of that, ECOWAS would like to reiterate that the Tuareg issue and the question of the north of Mali cannot be hijacked by terrorist forces. All mingling between Tuareg and narco-terrorists must be avoided, and the settlement of the underlying causes of the conflict must be approached with pragmatism. The Government of Mali must therefore establish, in collaboration with ECOWAS, the African Union, the United Nations and all partners, the conditions for a genuine national dialogue with all components of the nation, including the representatives of the communities of northern Mali.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Senegal.

Mr. Diallo (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): First of all, let me commend you, Sir, for holding today's Security Council briefing on the tragic situation that the people of Mali are going through. We would also like to thank Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, for his very useful briefing. We

also wish to thank the Permanent Representative of Mali, Ambassador Oumar Daou, for the additional information that he was kind enough to bring to the attention of this body.

My delegation fully endorses the statement that was just made on behalf of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) by Ambassador Youssoufou Bamba, Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mali is the victim of aggression accompanied by serious and unacceptable violence against its people. That fraternal country, which no doubt is enduring one of the darkest periods in its otherwise storied history, will suffer forever the destruction of a portion of its cultural and religious heritage at the hands of obscurantist gangs. That cynical enterprise, under the devious, covert guise of religion, poses a serious threat to the peace and security of the entire West African region and, beyond that, of the entire world.

In order to grasp the reprehensible nature and scale of the plot taking shape in the region, I would call on each Member of the Organization, in particularly of this body, to pay heed to the number of Islamist groups involved in the war in Mali. Close to 10 groups are wreaking havoc with full impunity in that area, as they seek to turn Mali into a hub for narco-terrorism and every kind of smuggling in Africa and beyond.

It is in that light that we should understand and welcome the rapid intervention by one of Mali's historic allies — France — upon that country's request and with the support of countries of the subregion, to halt and neutralize the jihadists' offensive against the large urban centres of the country. While the French intervention has already allowed the Malian army to retake the towns of Konna and Diabaly, the deployment of African troops, which was confirmed during the recent ECOWAS summit, will decidedly contribute to stepping up the pace of operations for retaking northern Mali.

I would like here to welcome the decision taken by Chad, a brotherly country that, although it is not a member of ECOWAS, wanted to share this heavy burden by deploying a large contingent. That is irrefutable proof of the growing international solidarity being shown in support of this crusade against international terrorism.

For its part, ECOWAS has already deployed hundreds of enabling elements, to be joined by others to complete the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA), which is predicted to reach a strength of over 5,000 troops.

In order to remain true to its ideals of regional solidarity, and given its historic, cultural and political ties with Mali, Senegal will deploy a contingent of 500 troops, made up of a command element, an artillery battery, an engineering company, a company for command, support and services, and a motorized company. In addition, as part of its participation in AFISMA, Senegal will fill nine command posts, seven of whom are already in Bamako. An initial group of enablers was sent out to the field on 20 January in order to prepare for the arrival of the rest of the contingent.

Since the beginning of the crisis in Mali, the Security Council has exhibited commendable willingness to find appropriate solutions to the crisis, as evidenced by its many statements and resolutions on the matter, the most recent of which is resolution 2085 (2012), of 20 December 2012, which authorized the deployment of a military force under African command. My country welcomes the positive attitude of all Council members in dealing with the risks of the terrorist threat.

I would like to take the opportunity provided by this briefing to call on all peace-loving countries, which have been dedicated to curbing the terrorist threat for some time now, to support, finance and arm the African troops engaged in that theatre of operations. In that regard, the donors conference for Mali scheduled to be held on 29 January in Addis Ababa will certainly be a watershed moment that will gauge the international community's determination to fight that scourge.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that the gravity of the situation in Mali requires — and even demands — a reaction that is commensurate with the threat looming over an already unstable region. The success of the international force remains dependent, to a large extent, on the support that a unified and determined international community will show for the people of Mali in order to see the ideals of peace, liberty and justice prevail throughout the world.

The recent hostage-taking at the Algerian gas refinery on the border with Libya is clear proof of the collateral damage that will be incurred by the plot to turn the Sahelo-Saharan region into a new sanctuary for international terrorism. If we allow that to happen, no country, region or continent will be spared.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Chad.

Mr. Allam-mi (Chad) (*spoke in French*): My delegation would like to thank you, Mr. President, and to extend our congratulations to you for having put the situation in Mali on the Council's agenda at such short notice, thus demonstrating — as if it were necessary — that your country is committed to dealing with all matters related to the maintenance of international peace and security throughout the world. My country welcomes this.

The terrorists wanted to catch the international community unawares, in order to control all of Mali and turn it into truly reliable staging grounds for their operations in the subregion and throughout the world. That is something that could have been foreseen very early on, at least in Chad's view, as we were among the countries that first stressed the urgent need for the international community to take appropriate measures to eradicate this evil before it spread throughout the Sahel and beyond.

It was clear that the situation constituted a grave threat to peace and security, not only in Mali and the subregion but throughout the world. A failure to act promptly would have opened the door to an expansion of terrorism, obscurantism and organized crime. The international community had to act to guarantee collective security, which was under daily threat by this scourge that was centred in Mali.

The President of Chad, His Excellency Mr. Idriss Deby Itno, therefore did not hesitate to commend France — and other de facto allies — for so promptly responding to the Malian President's appeal to halt the southward progression of the terrorists. Moreover, he called on African States and the entire international community to support the truly lifesaving initiative of the French army.

The new situation emerging in Mali as a result of the terrorists' intention to extend their occupation into the south of Mali means that the French intervention is a case of acting under force majeure, in accordance with the provisions of resolution 2085 (2012), with a view, of course, to ensuring the speedy establishment of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) and, ultimately, achieving a peaceful political solution to the crisis.

It is in that context that my country decided to send a military contingent of 2,000 troops to Mali, made up of one infantry regiment and two support battalions. Chad responded to the request of 14 January by Mali's Head of State, Mr. Dioncounda Traoré, and the calls by the African Union, confirmed in the letter of 16 January from the Peace and Security Commissioner of the African Union, in accordance with resolution 2085 (2012). That decision by the Government of Chad was unanimously supported by Chad's national assembly, including the majority and the opposition.

My delegation welcomes the unanimous support shown by the members of the Council to France and the African countries that have mobilized in support of Mali in these difficult circumstances. That diplomatic support must be continued and be strengthened to ensure that the terrorists, in their desperation, cannot exploit any weakness. Furthermore, on the practical level we urge the international community as a whole, especially the United Nations, immediately to provide the logistical means necessary — a logistical support package — to the troops arriving in Mali. In addition to the urgent need for the logistical support of the United Nations, the African-led International Support Mission in Mali also needs the necessary financial support so that it can successfully carry out its tasks.

My country has called on the Secretary-General and the African Union Commission to met that need. Africa hopes that the international community will forthwith give concrete expression to its solidarity in the form of logistics at the donors conference to be held in Addis Ababa on 29 January 2013, in accordance with paragraph 22 of resolution 2085 (2012).

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Burkina Faso.

Mr. Kogda (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, and your country on assuming the presidency of the Council for this month, and to thank you for holding this public debate on the situation in Mali.

My delegation associates itself with the statements made by the observer of the African Union Commission and the representative of the Chairman of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

The crisis that has struck Mali in recent months unfortunately took a dramatic turn a few weeks ago with an outbreak of attacks by armed groups seeking to conquer the southern part of the territory, in spite of warnings by the international community and a call

for dialogue for a peaceful settlement of the crisis. The ECOWAS mediator for Mali, President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso, deplored the violation of the commitments made by the Malian parties as a result of their meeting on 4 December 2012 in Ouagadougou, and condemned the resumption of hostilities. The armed group Ansar Dine, in deciding to join terrorist and extremist forces in attacking Malian units in Konna, has seriously violated the declaration of cessation of hostilities and repudiated its public rejection of terrorism, thereby compromising the possibility of a negotiated exit to the crisis.

There is no need to dwell on the tireless efforts of the countries of the region and ECOWAS to broker a dialogue between the Government of Mali and the rebel movements in the north that had pledged to break all ties with the terrorist groups. Throughout the process of political dialogue, the ECOWAS mediator and associate mediator, Mr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, patiently and firmly indicated to the different protagonists, including Ansar Dine and the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad (MNLA), the benefits conducting frank negotiations on the basis of objective grievances, which would preserve the unity and territorial integrity of Mali and obviate the use of force.

Unfortunately, the unilateral breakdown of the dialogue and the rejection of the commitments by some protagonists, particularly Ansar Dine, has left ECOWAS and the international community with no choice but to use force against the extremist groups, which have revealed the limits of their good faith.

My delegation takes this opportunity to thank France for its diligent response to Mali's requests to contain the advance of terrorist groups. Burkina Faso welcomes the courageous decision of French President François Hollande to provide prompt and critical support for the restoration of peace and stability in Mali and therefore throughout the entire region. Burkina Faso calls on the international community to immediately implement resolution 2085 (2012) authorizing the deployment of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali by supporting France's action on the ground, particularly by providing military logistics and the speedy establishment of the trust fund.

With respect to Burkina Faso, the announced deployment of a battalion of 500 men to Mali, alongside the ECOWAS troops, is being implemented. Moreover, a force of 1,000 men has been deployed along the border with Mali to stave off infiltrations by fleeing terrorist groups.

In conclusion, Burkina Faso will spare no effort in supporting the struggle against terrorism in all its forms and in restoring the territorial integrity of Mali. Burkina Faso affirms its readiness, once the situation has been stabilized, to work to promote a dialogue and the effective conduct of the political process in order to reach national reconciliation and to establish lasting peace in Mali.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Niger.

Mr. Boureima (Niger) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I should like to express my delegation's pleasure at seeing you, Mr. President, presiding over the Security Council for the month of January. We warmly congratulate you. I also wish to thank you for having organized this briefing, which is an ideal opportunity to discuss a matter of great importance to us all, namely, the situation in Mali. I would also like to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs for his informative briefing.

This briefing, which follows the public ministerial debate on a comprehensive approach to counter-terrorism (see S/PV.6900), held on 15 January under your presidency, Sir, once again demonstrates the great importance that you and your great country attach to the issue of peace and security, particularly in the Sahel region.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire on behalf of the States members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and that delivered by the Permanent Observer of the African Union. I would just like to add a few comments of my own.

The situation in Mali has gone on too long. That should not have happened because the international community's eyes have long been focused on the threats looming over the entire Sahel following the crisis in Libya. Indeed, the joint United Nations-African Union mission to assess the impact of the crisis in Libya on the countries of the region was exhaustive in its diagnosis and even provided appropriate recommendations. Meanwhile, the high-level meeting on the situation in Mali, initiated by the Secretary-General, was also very clear as to the need to effectively, comprehensively and above all promptly address the problems of the region

in general, and those in Mali in particular, in order to forestall an even graver state of affairs.

Certainly, everybody took an interest in the situation, encouraged by ECOWAS, the African Union and other stakeholders. However, the progressive and sensitive approach, far from leading to a peaceful settlement, appears on the contrary to have encouraged the armed groups, which soon exploited the institutional crisis to consolidate their dominance of the entire north of Mali. They must have viewed the phased reaction of the United Nations through the adoption of successive resolutions 2056 (2012) of 5 July, 2071 (2012) of 12 October and 2085 (2012) of 20 December 2012 as sign of lax resolve to counter their Machiavellian intentions. They therefore dared to venture farther south in ultimate effort to occupy the entire country.

Had it not been for the prompt and beneficial action taken by France, which quickly grasped the implications of the fall of the city of Kona to the armed groups, the situation today might be very different. That is why the entire international community must, as did the Conference of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS, commend France's intervention, which forestalled a situation that would have been very difficult to remedy. It must also provide effective and timely support to the joint efforts deployed by the forces of Mali and of France.

Over and above the legitimacy and legality conferred by the express request made by the authorities of Mali under the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, and specifically pursuant to article 51, which enshrines the universally recognized principle of individual and collective self-defence, France's intervention is, in our view, consistent with the spirit of resolution 2085 (2012), whose ultimate objective is none other than the restoration of Mali's territorial integrity — an essential precondition for the implementation of the other provisions of the resolution.

It is in that same spirit that the Conference of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS authorized the deployment of the international force, the African-led international support mission for Mali (AFISMA); neighbouring and friendly countries are involved in that context.

For its part, the Niger, which is deeply concerned about the situation in Mali, will participate in AFISMA; in fact, the Deputy Force Commander is a general from the Niger. Niger also recently increased the number of its troops from 500 to 650. I must also take this opportunity to state that all the constitutional formalities have been complied with and that the contingent is ready to go. This morning it was visited, before its imminent deployment, by the President of the Republic, the Head of State and of the army, His Excellency Mr. Mahamadou Issoufou, whose firm commitment to Mali since the outset of the crisis has been unflagging.

My country welcomes the expressions of solidarity with Mali, which are becoming more and more numerous and whose nature and scope will be made clear at the donors conference to be held in Addis Ababa on 29 January and in the meeting of the international support and follow-up group, to be hosted by the European Union in Brussels on 5 February.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Benin.

Mr. Zinsou (Benin) (*spoke in French*): May I begin, Sir, by once again congratulating you most warmly on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and thanking you for having convened this important meeting on Mali, which is being held at a critical juncture in the history of the country. Over and above Mali, the crisis affects the stability of the entire Sahel region, West Africa and the continent as a whole, and even the entire world. I wish also to thank Mr. Feltman for his very informative briefing on the situation.

Since northern Mali fell under the control of fundamentalist groups, the whole world has witnessed grave violations of human rights and the destruction of the cultural heritage of that country. That heritage is part of the historical memory of Africa; UNESCO has rightly determined it to be the heritage of all humankind and called for the mobilization of resources to restore the sites that have been destroyed.

We pay tribute to all agencies and partners, as well those persons of goodwill, who are seeking to provide humanitarian aid to the peoples affected by the crisis, particularly refugees and internally displaced persons.

The evolution of the situation in Mali has dispelled any doubt as to the nature of the threat and the challenges faced by Mali. The crisis in that country is the undeniable outcome of the fall of the former Libyan regime and in particular the result of the inflow of hegemonistic outside elements with ties to criminal networks and religious extremists, who have sought to

subjugate a free and independent State by making use of a tiny subgroup of one of the ethnic minorities.

Since 10 January 2013, they have clearly shown themselves to be terrorists and they have made clear the nature of the threat that they pose to the State of Mali. Over and above their actions in Mali, in recent days they have attacked Algeria's vital infrastructures, causing the deaths of innocent victims who had been taken hostage as retribution for that country's support for the efforts undertaken against the terrorists in Mali. Here Benin wishes to convey its condolences to the families of the victims of that attack, including the hostages, dozens of whom died at the hands of the terrorists. May their souls rest in peace.

There is no doubt that Mali will recover from this situation. It will rise again to pay tribute to the illustrious memory of its sons and friends who died on the battlefield to prevent the country from falling to the terrorists. Indeed, Mali is a State member of the Community of Democracies and the site of the conception and adoption of the Bamako Declaration, which in November 2000 laid down a shared conception of democracy in francophone countries.

In the view of Benin, Mali is and wishes to remain a secular State. Mali's borders have impregnable ramparts forged by respect by its neighbours for the principle of the intangibility of borders, which is so dear to the African Union, and by the recognition of the territorial integrity of Mali by the international community.

Mali can count on the solidarity of the States of Africa in general and those of West Africa in particular, which are strongly committed to regional integration and to mutual defence among its member countries.

At no time was Benin's belief shaken that the free world would not let Bamako fall into the hands of a transnational criminal network masquerading in different forms. The President of the Republic of Benin, His Excellency Mr. Boni Yayi, has reiterated his belief in the ability of the international community to demonstrate the necessary decisiveness with respect to the advancing threat of religious intolerance and fanatical fundamentalism, which fuel terrorism, which is seeking safe haven in Mali.

We wish to express our admiration of and deep gratitude to France, historically Mali's closest partner beyond the continent. At the decisive moment, France, through a robust intervention, came to the assistance of the Malian State, at the request of its legitimate authorities. It came to Africa's help a few hours after the urgent appeal launched by President Yayi, in his capacity as Chairman of the African Union, in the face of the swelling ranks of armed criminal groups advancing on Bamako.

France's intervention brought firepower consistent with the threat looming over Mali, stopped the aggressors from advancing and paved the way for the arrival of troops of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) that are part of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA). The developing situation has placed Mali in a situation of extreme urgency and requires an immediate increase of AFISMA's strength, mindful of the fact that it is an international force open to all contributions from other African countries that wish to participate in destroying the terrorist hydra in the Sahel.

We thank the countries that are providing logistical support for the deployment of the ECOWAS and African Union troops. AFISMA must be able to rapidly deploy its full capacity, in terms of troops and equipment, in order to assert itself on the ground before the terrorist groups with the sustained support of France and all countries of the free world highly concerned by the situation.

For us, the start of that military campaign is fully authorized by resolution 2085 (2012). The United Nations should immediately deploy to the African Union and ECOWAS the logistics, equipment and financial support package provided for by the resolution, and finance the implementation of the Organization's earmarked resources and other available resources ahead of the donor conference expected to help set up the trust fund, pursuant to paragraph 22 of the resolution.

In that regard, we thank the Secretary-General for his relevant proposals to the Security Council, on which we have been briefed here. We urge him to act on the most appropriate options to respond to the urgent situation on the ground so that the lack of resources and assistance does not jeopardize the lives of the deployed troops. We encourage France to maintain its active presence on the ground and to maintain its offensive position to prevent the terrorist groups from retaking the initiative.

That said, their leaders, who have the greatest responsibility for the crimes committed against humanity, should be sought out, found and brought

before international justice for their heinous crimes. Beyond the military campaign in Mali, the international community should redouble efforts to cut the supply lines and financial channels to the terrorist groups raging in the Sahara desert and should put an end to the trafficking from which they live.

Benin has decided to actively participate in AFISMA by making available the most battle-tested elements of its armed forces. In this Chamber, Benin launches an urgent appeal for international solidarity, in particular the material and financial support of all countries devoted to peace and justice, and to the troops of African States being deployed to commit themselves as soon as possible alongside the French troops and the Malian armed forces.

The prompt success of the military action under way will make it possible to launch the democratic process that will lead to free and transparent elections open to all Malians, from north to south, east to west, pursuant to resolution 2085 (2012). The United Nations must take all necessary measures to support that campaign and to prepare the ensuing political process. My delegation welcomes the deployment of the advance team of the United Nations political mission. The political process should be conducted in strict respect for the national loyalty owed by all communities that make up Mali to the Malian nation and for their increasing inclusiveness, while taking fully into account their influence in relation to the country's demography.

The United Nations must ensure that the terrorists answer for their acts before an appropriate international jurisdiction. Beyond the military campaign, it is necessary to redouble efforts to promote dialogue at the level of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in order to counter all kinds of fanaticism and fundamentalism.

In that way, we can prevent the resurgence of practices of past ages in order to promote the progress of humankind in upholding the common values of respect for dignity and the integrity of the individual for the greater good of its nations and peoples.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria.

Mr. Sarki (Nigeria): On behalf of my delegation, I would like to commend you, Mr. President, for convening this rather important meeting. I would also like to congratulate you on mounting the exhibition on Pakistan's 52 years of service to the international community through its peacekeeping efforts, which you undertook yesterday. We are not far behind you. We have been participating in peacekeeping missions for 52 years and, as long as circumstances permit, we will continue to do so.

We would like to sincerely commend Mr. Feltman and to congratulate him on the comprehensive message that he has sent to the international community today. We thank him for briefing us on the unhappy situation in Mali. We also thank him for mentioning the loss of lives of our soldiers, who are brutally attacked by terrorists on account of a decision to deploy to Mali. That is a price that we are willing to pay and we will not run away from our responsibility to Mali or any other country in the region.

I would like to thank the Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire for his comprehensive briefing on the situation in Mali in his country's capacity as Chairperson of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). We also wish to congratulate and thank the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations for providing the African Union (AU) overview of the situation in Mali.

This is a very timely meeting as it comes only days after the convening of the Extraordinary Session of the Authority of ECOWAS Heads of State and Government in Abidjan on 19 January. We would particularly like to draw attention to the Final Communiqué of that meeting as it is rather central to the resolution of the Malian crisis.

Let me seize this opportunity to express our deep and heartfelt condolences to the Government and people of Algeria for the loss of lives of both innocent hostages and members of the security forces in the recent heinous terrorist attack at the gas plant in Amenas. In strongly condemning those senseless and inhumane acts of violence, Nigeria stands together with other members of the international community, especially those countries that lost some of their nationals in the horrific incident. Such acts regretfully remind us that the scourge of terrorism remains a continuing challenge and that no country is immune from its malignant tentacles.

While we convey our deepest sympathies and condolences to the traumatized and bereaved families, my delegation wishes to reiterate that the Security Council has a critical role to play as a forum for advancing collective action against global terrorism.

The fight against terrorism remains a very high priority for Nigeria both domestically and across our subregion. We also recognize the terrible threat that Mali is now facing from terrorist groups and armed militants. As part of the unfolding international effort to free Mali of this threat and danger, Nigeria has commenced the accelerated deployment of 1,200 troops as part of its contribution to the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA). We note with satisfaction that other ECOWAS and AU member States and other countries have also decided to contribute troops in support of the Malian army's efforts to free its country from the terrorist and extremist menace.

As has already been mentioned, Major-General Shehu Usman Abdulkadir of the Nigerian Army was endorsed as Force Commander of AFISMA by ECOWAS Heads of State and Government at their recent meeting in Abidjan. It is important to underline the fact that the availability of a Nigerian military officer to head AFISMA and Nigeria's financial assistance to Mali, as well as the role of President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan as associate mediator in Mali, together with President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso, are all reflections of our deep concern at and interest in the security situation in Mali and the subregion as a whole.

Nigeria's actions are in line with the Security Council's decision of 10 January and resolution 2085 (2012), which calls for the rapid deployment of AFISMA and the strengthening of international support for Mali. Nigeria desires a peaceful resolution of all disputes. Indeed, in October 2012, President Goodluck Jonathan undertook a mission to Bamako to meet with all parties and foster dialogue. However, in a situation where room for such reconciliation is not allowed or given, regrettably the use of force becomes inevitable and indeed necessary.

Our action in Mali is in line with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, and therefore needs no justification or defence. We are also adhering to the norms and. principles that underpin the protocols of our regional grouping, ECOWAS, on collective security and the protection of member States' territorial integrity. We went into Mali to assist its army to free its territory and defend its integrity, independence and unity.

Beyond all of these considerations, we would like to underscore the fact that the Sahel region and countries like Mali have been ignored or neglected by the international community for too long. The sufferings of their people and the deteriorating security situation were not deemed worthy of the attention of the world until matters became compounded and it was too late to deal with them peacefully. The debate of the Security Council on 10 December 2012 (see S/PV.6882) and the high-level meeting on the Sahel convened by the Secretary-General on 26 September 2012 were, in our view, actually more about the neglect of the Sahel region than anything else. The Secretary-General had consistently drawn attention to the situation in the region, and had the foresight to draw up an integrated regional strategy for the Sahel. His appointment of Mr. Romano Prodi as his Special Envoy for the Sahel also reflected his concern.

Sufficient, accelerated and timely delivery of humanitarian assistance is desperately needed for the entire Sahel region. In the medium and longer terms, structured peacebuilding initiatives, the strengthening of security sector reform and institution-building — including good governance, the entrenchment of democratic institutions, human rights and youth empowerment — are direly need across the region. Nigeria therefore recognizes that the use of force, while necessary to tackling the immediate terrorist threat and instability in Mali and the entire region, cannot be an effective long-term strategy or solution.

The international community must do more. Promoting uniform economic development and increasing development assistance would enable the Governments of the region to address the root causes of instability and conflicts. They would, for instance, be able to address concerns such as extreme poverty, the impacts of climate change, pervasive illiteracy, unemployment, general discontent and even secessionist tendencies, if they were properly assisted by the rest of the world financially and materially. This would no doubt help to engender cohesion, counter extremism and reduce the appeal of violence.

It is in that connection that Nigeria would urge the active participation of all Member States in the donors conference, scheduled for 29 January in Addis Ababa, for the trust fund established in paragraph 22 of resolution 2085 (2012). We hope that the donors conference will galvanize all Member States, international organizations, civil society organizations and other stakeholders to work in concert for the attainment of the common objective of tackling terrorism and

addressing human rights and humanitarian concerns in the subregion.

My delegation wishes to commend the unique and invaluable contributions of France and other countries, including Niger, our sister country Chad, Togo and the many others that have pledged troops to this onerous effort of the global community to restore the sovereignty of Mali. The pivotal and timely action of France, in the light of the deteriorating security situation in Mali and in the context of the resolution 2085 (2012), was a key lesson of the significant value that a single country can add to global counter-terrorism efforts. There is no doubt that the impact of the French efforts and the significant contributions of many countries towards assisting Mali in the resolution of its security and institutional crisis confirm that close and systematic cooperation among Member States is an essential prerequisite and effective strategy for tackling terrorism.

It is our hope that similar commitment and forward-looking action will be taken by the world in addressing other concerns of the countries in the Sahel and in supporting the United Nations to achieve the objectives of the Secretary-General's integrated regional strategy for the Sahel.

The President: I now give the floor to Head of the Delegation of the European Union.

Mr. Mayr-Harting: I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Feltman for his important and informative briefing.

(*spoke in French*)

I also thank the Permanent Representative of Mali for his statement today.

The European Union condemns the actions carried out by terrorist and criminal groups against the Malian Armed Forces, threatening the territorial integrity of the country and the safety of its population. Against such a backdrop and in keeping with relevant resolutions of the Security Council — specifically resolutions 2056 (2012), 2071 (2012) and especially 2085 (2012) — the European Union supports the efforts of the region and of the international community. We welcome the rapid response of France, with the support of other States members of the European Union and a number of African countries, to the request from the President of Mali for military assistance against terrorist and criminal groups.

The European Union supports the rapid deployment of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA), pursuant to resolution 2085 (2012), and reiterates its commitment to swiftly providing financial assistance to the Mission, in particular through the mobilization of the African Peace Facility. Preparations are under way to provide financial and logistical support in close cooperation with the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States.

The European Union will also participate in the donors conference scheduled for 29 January in Addis Ababa. In that context, the European Union takes a favourable view of the most recent letter of the Secretary-General on the different options for providing logistical support to AFISMA. The European Union hopes that the Security Council will be able to quickly decide on authorizing a solid system for financing the Mission.

In response to the direct request of the Malian authorities, and in accordance with resolution 2085 (2012), the European Union decided to deploy a training mission to provide military training to the Malian Armed Forces. Brigadier General François Lecointre has been appointed Force Commander, and an initial technical team should arrive in Bamako in the coming days in order to deploy the Mission in February.

Political progress is crucial to ensuring stability in Mali over the long term. In that respect, the European Union earnestly requests the Malian authorities to adopt and implement as soon as possible a road map to re-establish democracy and constitutional order. It encourages an inclusive national dialogue open to the populations of the north and all groups that have rejected terrorism and recognized the territorial integrity of the country. The army must be reformed and placed under civil authority. Once those conditions are met, the European Union is determined to gradually resume its development cooperation and to swiftly disburse the scheduled funding.

The European Union reiterates the importance it attaches to close cooperation with the Malian efforts and those of other regional and international partners. Accordingly, and in close connection with the United Nations and the African Union, the European Union is planning to convene, in Brussels on 5 February, the next ministerial meeting of the international support and follow-up group on the situation in Mali, as many have mentioned today.

The European Union is prepared to strengthen without delay its support for the efforts of humanitarian organizations to assist the populations in Mali and neighbouring countries in need. It emphasizes the importance of effective coordination among humanitarian stakeholders under United Nations auspices, and reiterates its call on all parties involved to allow unfettered humanitarian access to populations in need and to ensure the safety of humanitarian workers.

The European Union calls on all parties to ensure the protection of civilian populations and to respect international humanitarian law and human rights. Very particular attention should be focused on the situation of children — not only those who live in combat zones or who carry weapons, but also those whose daily lives have been disrupted by forced displacement or humanitarian problems. All parties and individuals engaged in Mali will be held accountable for their actions.

The European Union emphasizes the importance of maintaining stability in the Sahel and of preventing a negative impact on neighbouring countries. In that context, it reiterates its commitment to supporting Mali's neighbours as part of its Sahel strategy in order to strengthen their security and development. To that end, the appointment of a Special Representative of the European Union for the Sahel should be forthcoming shortly.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.